97-84111-22

Barnes, Julius Howland

Modern industry and individualism

[S.l.]

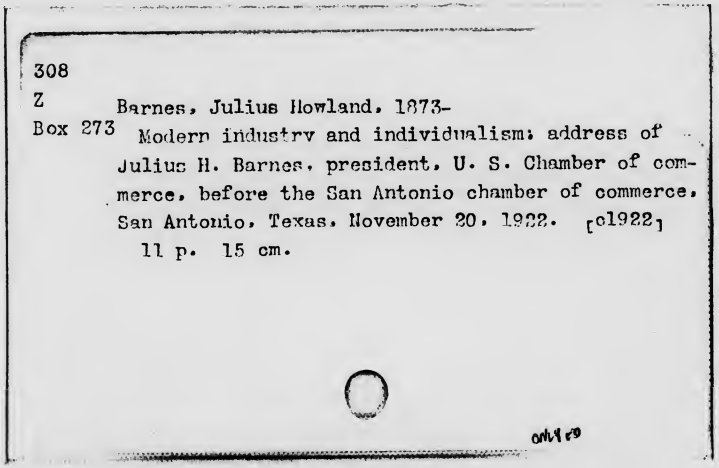
[c1922]

97-84111-22
MASTER NEGATIVE #

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
PRESERVATION DIVISION

BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

ORIGINAL MATERIAL AS FILMED - EXISTING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD


308
Z
Box 273 Barnes, Julius Howland, 1873-
Modern industry and individualism; address of Julius H. Barnes, president, U. S. Chamber of commerce, before the San Antonio chamber of commerce, San Antonio, Texas, November 20, 1922. [c1922]
11 p. 15 cm.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: Reproductions may not be made without permission from Columbia University Libraries.

TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 9:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 6-5-97 INITIALS: AB

TRACKING # : 24045

FILMED BY PRESERVATION RESOURCES, BETHLEHEM, PA.

Modern Industry and Individualism

308
Z
Box 273

Modern Industry and Individualism

Address of
JULIUS H. BARNES
President, U S. Chamber of Commerce
before the
San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
San Antonio, Texas
November 20, 1922

Copyright 1922

JULIUS H. BARNES

May 5, 1930 DA/Hee

Modern Industry and Individualism

In our National history there are places consecrated by heroic deeds and which stand out as shrines for American patriotism. Plymouth, Valley Forge, Gettysburg, and, not the least, the Alamo here in San Antonio, arouse the most profound emotions.

Wherever men have greatly dared, greatly endured, greatly achieved, or greatly died, there, surely lies the inspiration for solemn consideration of the tendencies of our National life. It matters not so much that the pioneer and that the conquest of the frontier exist only in American tradition. It matters much that under modern conditions and modern surroundings there shall be kept alive the same heroic qualities that inspired those men who advanced the outposts of civilization. Self-reliance, courage, resourcefulness, and loyalty to comrades and associates; these are the qualities that make for sound human progress and wholesome community life.

With the growing complexity of our social structure, the problems to be solved are necessarily of other complexion, but nevertheless, require the same fundamental qualities and virtues.

It matters not so much that unwise laws are written upon our statute books, if, upon being condemned by actual experience and by actual trial, they are corrected or eliminated. It matters much if, through indifference or through unwillingness to assert fundamental human rights, these unwise laws be left unchallenged, to work their evil effects in individual character deterioration.

It is, for instance, possible for the State, by unwise taxation laws, to stifle the efforts of honest industrialists, and to put a premium upon the dishonest in business life.

It matters not so much if, in placing the shifting frontier between Government and Industry, mistakes are made and unwise experiments attempted, if there be preserved a determination to correct mistakes when demonstrated, and if there be preserved a sound recognition that all progress is the aggregate result of individual effort multiplied a million-fold. Therefore, it matters much if there be written into Government in its relation with the individual citizen those social theories

which destroy personal initiative, individual self-reliance, and remove the incentive for individual effort and accomplishment, on the aggregate of which our whole National progress has been based.

There is no finer conception of appeal to human altruism than a properly understood appreciation of the profound social and political philosophy comprised in the tradition of American individualism.

This philosophy is the natural enemy of autocracy because it is based on a conception of perfect equality of opportunity for every individual man. It is far from socialism because it holds each individual responsible for his own career, accomplished without reliance on the aid of organized society, but insisting also that the individual be made secure, by Government, in his attained position and possessions.

It is not capitalism because again it relies on individual character and accomplishment and not mainly on the power and influence of stored-up savings of other men.

It may be summarized, for popular understanding, as the doctrine of Fair Play.

Moreover, it will be helpful, in estimating the value of legislative or administrative acts by which Government touches the lives and activities of its people, to ap-

ply this simple test:—"Is this act necessary in the preservation of fair play between individuals?" If an act cannot be justified by this analysis, then it has no place upon the statute books of individualistic America.

In the last few years, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States has had occasion on several major national questions to speak the voice of the Organized Business of America. In no respect has its voice or its action violated the fundamentals of this philosophy of fair play. Organized business has seen the establishment in Washington of agencies pleading for and laboring to secure the special interest of special sections of our people. The necessarily narrow aims of these special agencies gave them a peculiar effectiveness in directing influence and pressure. Only within the last ten years and through the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, has Organized Business been able to speak with the force and authority of National conviction behind it. Moreover, the very multiplicity of activities comprised within organized business would greatly embarass its work if it attempted to act for the single interest of any single section or any single industry. Therefore it has found its justification and its security in applying to every act of National leadership the underlying principle

of National fair play.

It was in this spirit that it helped to secure the establishment of a Federal Reserve Banking Act which demonstrated its soundness and effectiveness in the great strain of an unexpected war.

It helped to establish a National Budget by which the Nation's receipts and expenditures are estimated and compared, leading to care and study and economy in National Administration.

It helped to secure a revision of unwise taxation laws which were stifling the spirit of enterprise, until a year ago the result was written in the National record of 4,000,000 unemployed. Must America go through that distress again to learn again the folly of suppressing individual incentive?

It helped to further the adoption of a discretionary clause in the application of duties in the last tariff law by which some measure of flexibility is possible to meet the ever changing conditions of overseas trade.

It helped to cultivate a national sentiment in this country which recognizes if America is to have an American Fleet in competition with the fleets of the World, and ready for conversion to National defense in event of war, it must, through

some form of subsidy, equalize the excessive operating costs occasioned largely by our own Navigation Law requirements.

It helped to secure a revision of the Railroad Laws by which there is restored some measure of fair treatment to the railroads and opened to them some opportunity for possible earnings, by care and skill, as will maintain and develop these Railroads with the ever increasing tonnage of the country.

It helped to secure and make effective generous expenditures from our National Treasury to aid those who suffered disability in National service in our defense, and it opposed granting gigantic sums to those uninjured without providing the revenues from which those gigantic sums, largely unasked and unnecessary, should be paid. This would easily have been the first step upon the dangerous road of inflation which has led to utter ruin in so many countries of Europe.

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States has an abiding faith in the effectiveness of Government by a free people intelligently informed and with an honesty of purpose expressed in this philosophy of fair play.

It believes the army of unemployed was eliminated by the resourcefulness and enterprise of individuals and communities, informed of the situation, and willing to assume the commercial hazards of reviving suspended industries and to establish new industries; aided also, fortunately, at the same time, by fairer taxation that left some inducement to commercial ventures.

It has just assisted in solving the problem of coal distribution by the cooperative effort of industry and individuals rather than by the processes of law and regulation. The coal situation has been solved, broadly speaking, and the menace which followed five months' partial suspension of production has been rendered harmless, and by voluntary action. Accurate information to the public, and an appeal to self-restraint by industries in buying, quickened the normal processes of supply and demand and made effective to the utmost the current production. In that, there has been a great national object-lesson written in confirmation of the effectiveness of voluntary cooperation in industry.

If there had been no national business leadership and no national contact with industry and organized business in this country, this great demonstration of national team-play could not have been made so instantly effective.

I leave to you to place your own value on the demonstration that there are more effective means at hand for the correction of large-scale social and industrial evils and defects, than the multiplying of legislation upon legislation and regulation upon regulation, invading every man's business and every man's home.

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States is erecting in Washington a National Home for American Business and Industry. It is a symbol of the dignity and stability of American Business in its appearance. High ideals, inspire the tradition of service which will be created in that center. Every business man of America will have a proper pride in that home and that organization. But if it is to be effective in its leadership and is to speak the convictions of American Commerce and Industry with sureness and with influence, it must rest upon a broad National foundation of industrial and community support. It is the support of just such organizations as your own here today which makes effective the leadership of the National Chamber, and if that leadership is to be effective and influential in a community of free people, it will be exercised locally and nationally in the spirit in which I have attempted to define by

these ideals and purposes, as the fundamental tradition of absolute equality of opportunity and of fair play.

END OF
TITLE